

A FREE and an ARBITRARY GOVERNMENT
compared;

IN TWO 16.

SERMONS:

The FIRST preached in the Church
of Broughton, on *Wednesday* the
18th of *December* 1745;

Being the Day appointed by the KING for
a GENERAL FAST, on Account of the
present Rebellion;

AND

The SECOND preached also in the same Place.

By ANDREW RICHARDSON *Minister of the Gospel*
at Broughton.

*Cultivate the Principles of TRUE LIBERTY, and teach them
to your Children.——We must earnestly recommend it to all
the Ministers of this National Church, to endeavour, by pub-
lick and private Instruction, to fill the Minds of People, of
all Ranks and Ages, as they have Opportunity, with a just
Abhorrence of the Abominations of Popery, the Terrors of
arbitrary Power, &c.*

Warn. Com. Gen. Ass. Ch. Scot.



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A Free and Arbitrary Government
compared.

SERMON I.

2 KINGS xi. 17.

*And Jehoiada made a Covenant between the King also
and the People.*

DANIEL v. 19.

*---Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept
alive; and whom he would he set up, and whom he
would he put down.*

THESE Texts of Scripture mutually illustrate each other: The former describes the Way and Manner of erecting and establishing a free Government, which always presupposes, and must be considered as founded on a Contract between the King and the People: The latter describes in a lively and striking Manner, and, at the same Time, in the most beautiful Simplicity, an absolute Monarch, making his own arbitrary Will the sole Rule of Government. In the former we have a King and his People, after making a Covenant with God, and engaging to yield him universal Obedience and Submission, entering into a Covenant with one another, under the Eye and Direction of a good Man, who was a faithful Servant of the true God, a sincere Friend to both the King and the People, and who had nothing more

more at Heart than that true Religion, the publick Good, and the King's true Interest should be advanced. *Jeboiada* made a Covenant between the Lord and the King and the People, that they should be the Lord's People; between the King also and the People. In the latter we have an absolute Monarch, a King possesse of arbitrary Power, though not perhaps making the worst Use of it, in conducting his Administration, and dispensing Good and Evil to his Subjects by no other Rule than his own mere Will and Pleasure; *Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up, and whom he would he put down.* If considering these two Texts separately is enough to make us love and value a free Government, and to raise in our Minds the greatest Abhorrence against such an one as is merely arbitrary; much more may the viewing them both together have this Effect: For when a Comparison is stated betwixt these two Forms of Government, which are so directly opposite to one another in their Nature, Tendency and Consequences, it must make each of them appear in its own Colours, in the strongest Light; the Peace, Order, and Happiness of a free Government, so fraught with Blessings, appears to the best Advantage, when compared with the Miseries and Calamities, that attend Arbitrary Power or Government, which in its Turn appears clothed with double Horror, when compared with the Happiness that naturally results from a just and equal Government, founded upon, and administrated according to such Laws, as are calculated for securing the Virtue and Happiness of both King and People.

In order to set this Matter in a just Light, I shall, in the

I. Place, Offer to your Consideration the Rise and Nature of a Free Government, as it is founded upon a mutual Contract betwixt King and People.

II. The Rise and Nature of Arbitrary Government, and the Iniquity and Injustice of it.

III. I shall compare these two Sorts of Governments together, as to their respective Effects and Consequences.

IV. I shall apply.---I return to the

I. Of these ; To offer to your Consideration the Rise and Nature of a free Government, as it is founded upon a mutual Contract betwixt King and People.---And,

(1.) In our entering on this Subject, we may observe, that Society began with Mankind. Wherever there are Men, they run into one another's Company. The Law of Benevolence, implanted in their Nature, powerfully inclines them to resort together. And besides, as Mankind are the most Helpleys of all the Creatures, if separated from one another, and each of them could procure but a small Supply to his various Wants by himself alone, and but weakly defend himself from Injuries and Danger ; so this calls for their mutual Union, and makes their united Labours necessary, in order to supply their Wants, and to provide for their Safety. Thus Benevolence and Self-love conspire in prompting Men to form themselves into Societies. and these two Principles of Action, under the Guidance of a Third, the Law of Righteousness and Justice, implanted also in human Nature, incline and direct Men in the forming of Societies, to enact and establish Laws for their mutual Protection, for maintaining and securing the Good of the Publick, and the Rights and Properties of Individuals,

(2.) And

(2.) And as in a degenerate World, some will be vicious, and transgress the Laws, invade the private Property of their Neighbour, or prove unfaithful to the publick Interest, it is just that they should agree, that whosoever shall be found transgressing more or less, in either of these Respects, shall be liable to such Punishment as may be adequate to the respective Natures and Aggravations of their Crimes; and this with a View to curb Iniquity, and to maintain the Peace and Happiness of the Society.

It is true, as no Man has a Right to do himself an Injury, to throw away his Life out of a peevish Humour, to rush into Difficulties, when not called to do so in some noble and important Cause, so no Man can impower another Man, or any Number of Men, to injure him, or molest him according to mere Will and Pleasure: This would be to give away a Right he never had himself, and such a Grant, were it made, being contrary to Justice and the Law of Self-preservation, would in itself be void and null.

But then there is no real Inconsistence betwixt the Law of Self-preservation, and the Assent to such Laws as enact proper Punishment to be inflicted upon Criminals.

Out of the Law of Self-preservation arises another, that of Self-defence, which gives a Man, when attacked by a Thief, a Robber, or a Murderer, a Right to defend himself against the unjust or cruel Invader of his Property or Life; which, if he cannot do without taking away the Life of the injurious Person, he may justly kill him in Self-defence. The Malefactor is an Enemy to Mankind; and, as out of an established Society, every one that meeteth him may kill him, or inflict the condign Punishment

ment of his Crime : So in a well regulated Society, the whole Society being engaged to defend its Members in their Lives and Fortunes against unjust Aggressors, may reasonably inflict the proper Punishment upon evil Doers. It is doing a Man no Injury to take away his Life, who does not deserve to live, whose Preservation would be dangerous to the Lives of others, and prejudicial to the common Good. Every Man will acknowledge the Justice and Reasonableness of this in every Case which does not affect himself, as well as the Necessity of it for preserving the very Being of Society : And therefore, when it comes to be a Man's own Case, and he incurs the just and necessary Punishment, no Injury is done him in the Infliction of it ; under the Protection of the Society he was brought up, and enjoyed all his Rights ; and in that Case his continuing in it when he came to Years, or if he was originally a Foreigner, his entering into it, being naturalized, and living in it, and carrying on Business under the Protection of its Laws, must in Reason be considered as a full Assent to them, a virtual voluntary subjecting himself to be governed by them ; and now that he has done what he might have known would make him forfeit such Protection, and render him obnoxious to Punishment, he ought to submit when it is applied to him, and acknowledge the Justice of his Sentence.

(3.) Laws and Penalties being thus enacted for the Preservation of publick Peace and Order ; the Society, to secure the Execution of them, may appoint one to rule and govern them, according to these Laws of their own making, and his explicate Consent so to rule, may be demanded, and is indeed implied in his accepting the Trust.

(4.) And as the Administration of Affairs will require many Officers and Judges under the supreme Ruler, and also the utmost Application on his own Part, it is just that the Society subject themselves to such Taxes as may enable him to maintain his Government, to defend their Rights and Liberties, and that they reward him liberally for his great important Service; they can do no less than maintain him in the greatest Affluence and Splendor, who is daily attentive to their various Interests, whose Cares and Labours are constantly employed to make them a happy People.

Now while they let him want for nothing that is suitable to his Dignity, in the faithful Discharge of his important Trust, honour and obey him, and take every Method to sweeten to him the Cares of Government: It is highly fit, as they entrust him only with a Power to do them Good, that they bring him under the strongest, most solemn Engagements, to maintain them in their Rights, their Liberties and Properties, to make their Laws the Rule and Measure of his Government, and not to swerve from these to gratify his own Ambition; while on their Part, they promise Obedience and Subjection to him, and engage to maintain and support him in the right Administration of the Government.

This is the original Plan of Government formed by a free People and their King: This is the mutual Compact entered into between them, and without which they must be in a State of Nature, with respect to each other. Where there is no mutual Obligation between King and People, no common Rule nor Law, they are severally to submit to, no reciprocal Duties to be performed, there is an End of just and lawful Government. This brings us to the

II. Thing

II. Thing proposed: To consider the Rise and Nature of Arbitrary Power or Government, and to prove the Iniquity and Injustice of it.

The greatest Tyrants have at Times confest, that the Good of the People is the great End of Government; and that the best Way to advance it, is to rule according to the Laws of Justice.

When they at first began to enroach upon the Liberties of their Subjects in particular Cases, it was under some Pretence to advance their greater Good upon the whole. They still confest themselves bound to promote the publick Wellfare. This was only so long as they did not think themselves secure in their Violence from publick Justice, nor out of the Reach of the People's Vengeance; but when once they had fully strengthened, and raised themselves upon the Ruin of their oppressed People, and had got so great Power into their Hands, as might support and maintain them in their Tyranny, they took off the Mask, disowned their Obligation to be-friend the People, but in so far as it was agreeable to their own Will and Humour; contended for a Power independent upon the People, alledged they derived their Right to reign from God alone, and were accountable to none but him.

Their Abettors confirmed what they said, and further taught that their Right was hereditary and indefeasible, that it could not be forfeited for ever, by any Cruelties or Pieces of Injustice that might be committed by themselves or their Posterity upon the People. This being the Rise and Nature of Arbitrary Government, the Iniquity of it is obvious at first Sight: But that it may appear in the strongest Colours, let it be observed in the

1st Place,

1st Place, That as this Sort of Government destroys the mutual Obligation betwixt Prince and People, sets the one above all Law, and exposes the other to Slavery without Redress; so it is contrary to the first Principles of Justice, is subversive of all Righteousness; and were it true, the Doctrine of the eternal Difference betwixt moral Good and Evil, and of the unalterable Obligation of Virtue, would be false. This is so manifest, that Mr. *Hobbes*, a Man of the acutest Genius of any of the Defenders of Arbitrary Government, was obliged to deny the Difference between moral Good and Evil, and to set up the King's Will as the only Law and Source of moral Obligation: Any Thing was just or unjust, as the King would have it. Subjects must consult the Pleasure of the King, in order to know what is Good and Evil: The Sovereign's Pleasure is the only Rule for determining Right and Wrong, and the People must regulate their whole moral Conduct by the King's Commandment. *

But however artful Men may attempt to sap the Foundation of Morality, a Sense of it is natural to the human Mind, springs up voluntarily in every Conscience, and forces itself upon the most abandon'd. Notwithstanding this, the subtle *Hobbes*, to make
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* *Regulas boni & mali, justi & injusti, honesti & inhonesti esse leges civiles; ideoque quod Legislatores praeceperit, id pro bono, quod vetuerit, id pro malo habendum esse. De cive, Cap. 12. Sect. 1. Et ibidem. Quod actio justa vel injusta sit, a jure imperantis provenit. Reges legitimi quae imperant, justa faciunt imperando; quae vetant, vetando faciunt injusta.-----Universaliter & in omnibus obedire obligamur. De cive, Cap. 14. Sect. 10. Opinio eorum qui docent peccare subditos, quoties mandata principum suorum, quae sibi injusta videntur esse, exsequuntur, & erronea est, & inter eas numeranda, quae obedientiae civili adversantur. De cive, Cap. 12. Sect. 2.*

his Scheme consistent, was obliged to belie the Dictates of his own Conscience, and to harden his Face against that of every other Man, in his denying that Men were under any Obligation to any sort of Conduct, but what the King laid upon them, who again had a Right to command or to do, whatever he had a Mind, and was accountable for the Exercise of his Right to no mortal Creature. This Doctrine being once swallowed down, not only confirmed the Kingdom in the Hands of the reigning Tyrant, but impowered him to transmit it to his Posterity, without allowing the People to call in Question his or their Right to tyrannize and lord it over them as they pleased. This second Error is a Consequence of the first. The King's being absolute Lord of all his Subjects, they and their Effects become the natural Inheritance of his Posterity, which never can be forfeited by any Acts of Cruelty, because the King's Will, which is the supreme Law, in whatever Acts of Cruelty it is signified, gives them the Stamp of Justice: And yet as the very Essence of Justice lyes in a mutual Obligation upon reasonable Minds to perform relative Duties to one another; so the denying this Obligation to be valid, in the Case of Kings towards their People, the loosing Tyrants from any Tie on their Part, to consult the Peoples Interest, while the People are obliged to support their cruel Masters in their Tyranny, is subversive of all Righteousness and Justice. And in the

2d. Place, So far as it is subversive of all Righteousness, it is also of natural Religion; for the Difference between Just and Unjust, Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, being taken away, the Perfections of Justice, Righteousness and Goodness in God will have

have no Meaning. Thus God would be stript of all his moral Attributes, and none but the natural ones, commonly so called, would remain ascribed to him; he could not henceforth be conceived as the moral Governor of the World, or managing its great Affairs by a just and righteous Providence: He would be chiefly apprehended to be clothed with mere Strength or Power, which, tho' infinite and eternal, would be blind and undirected without his moral Attributes. This partial Way of apprehending God, as stript of his most amiable Excellencies, not only gives unworthy Conceptions of him, and is in itself a Species of refined Atheism, but plainly leads to the grossest Sort of it, the total Denial of the Being of a God. Thus the Scheme of absolute arbitrary Government, as laid down by *Hobbes*, and taken in its full Latitude, lands in Atheism.

This brings me to consider Absolute and Arbitrary Government, when taken in a lower and more confined Sense, and not manifestly tending to such daring and monstrous Impiety, but yet plainly unrighteous and unjust. Many, who in Charity we are bound to hope, were sincere Believers of the Reality of Virtue, of the Being and Providence of God, and even of revealed Religion: Many, otherwise eminent and worthy Persons, (it is not against Mens Characters that we contend, but against their Opinions) have espoused the Doctrine of absolute arbitrary Government, and indefeasible hereditary Right; and, which is more, have pretended to found this Doctrine on the Word of God: They did not indeed take it in so large a Sense as *Hobbes* did; the Laws of Conscience and Revelation being obligatory upon all reasonable Men and Christians, both of them being the Laws of God, and not to be altered

altered or disannulled by human Institutions ; they so far lowered the Power of the King, and lightened the Yoke and Burden of his Subjects, as neither to give him a Right to ask, nor to lay them under an Obligation to perform active Obedience to such of his Laws, as were contrary to the Laws of Righteousness and revealed Religion : But then, if the Sovereign should actually give out unjust and cruel Edicts, and put them in Execution, his Right to his Crown, according to them, still remain'd entire and indefeasible ; and it was the indispensable Duty of his Subjects, tamely to submit to all the Hardships he should be pleased to lay upon them. They, whose Consciences could not allow them to yield active Obedience to his arbitrary wicked Laws, were bound in Conscience to passive Obedience to the Penalties of them, however cruel.

Now the Iniquity and Unreasonableness of such a Doctrine, will appear, if we consider some of the many Absurdities attending it, were it true : And a few Observations may serve to expose it.

(1.) Because the Scripture forbids us to resist a King in the due Execution of his Office, upon Pain of Damnation. This is no good Reason for not resisting him in any Case, even when he acts out of his Office altogether, because he is set up to be the Minister of God for Good unto the People, Shall they therefore not resist him, when he does them the greatest Evil ? A good King is an Instrument in the Hand of Providence, of advancing the private and publick Happiness of Mankind : But is a bad one, the Cause of private and publick Misery, to be honoured as God's Vicegerent, though he acts in Opposition to all the Laws of Heaven ? ---- If God exercises a diffusive and extensive Goodness, a tender com-

compassionate Concern towards his Creatures in their several Orders : If *the Lord is good to all*, and if *his tender mercies are over all works*, Psal. cxlv. 9. does it therefore follow, that whole Nations were made to gratify the Ambition of one Man, that he may ride and gall them [at his Pleasure? Or is it not a more natural Inference, that one is made for the many; that the Good of the Governed is the End of Government; and that that Form of Government which is best calculated for advancing the general Welfare, has most of God, of Goodness, and Religion in it? Who, after this, will look on Non-resistance to a Tyrant, whose Administration is a direct Contradiction to God's kind and bounteous Government of the World, and which defeats the very End of Civil Government, to be a Duty? It is true, in this imperfect State, there will be Failures in Kings as well as common Men. Allowances must be made for human Weaknesses and Passions. If every Failure in the Performance of relative and social Duties, or if several Failures, or even Commissions and Transgressions, were to dissolve Mens Relations to one another, these Relations could not subsist for the shortest Time; and therefore a King failing to perform his Duty to his Subjects, or even acting in Opposition to it in some Instances, is not enough to dissolve the Relation betwixt him and them, or to free them from all Obligation of Submission to him: But then, tho' several private Injuries done particular Persons, or some little Encroachments upon publick Liberty, will not justify the Subjects in rising up against their King, yet, if he strike at the Root and Foundation of their Rights, dispense with the Laws, and go on in a Course of Tyranny and Oppression, they may not only resist him in these cruel Measures,

but

but as he thereby notoriously breaks Covenant with them on his Part, they may justly declare themselves under no Obligation to submit to him on theirs.

(2.) Absolute Submission is due to none but God : It is the complex Character of the supreme Being, considered as exerting all his Attributes in perfect Harmony and Concord ; it is this, that both gives us just Views of the Foundation and Nature of his Sovereignty, as absolute, and, at the same Time, with a gentle, but powerful Influence, disposes the Mind to acquiesce in, and submit to it. The Perfection of God's Government of the World, arises from the joint Exertion of his natural and moral Attributes, and not from any one of them, considered as acting separately, and by itself. The Doctrine of Dominion being founded in mere * Power, is so far from being agreeable to Truth, that even God's Omnipotence, separately considered, is not the Foundation of his Sovereignty. It is the absolute and infinite Perfection of his moral Attributes, invariably inclining him to employ his natural Ones, his Power and Omniscience in the Cause of Righteousness ; it is this that makes it unalterably fit for us to give him an unreserved, unlimited Obedience and Submission ; but because Almighty God who is spotless Purity, and perfect Goodness, to give out good Laws, and to consult our Happiness, has an absolute Dominion over us ; Is this a Reason for our absolute Submission to any like ourselves, whom God has not

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endowed

* *Jus dominandi ab ipsa potentia derivatur. De Cive Cap. 15. Sect. 5.* Nor does it alter the Case, whether a Man raises himself to the Power of governing, or derives it from his Father : If Justice is wanting in his Government, there remains sought but Power in either Case, which shews the Absurdity of the Doctrine of indefeasible Right.

endowed with perfect Purity and Goodness?----Because an all-wise God is ordering and connecting Things in his incomprehensible Scheme of Providence, so as to make them all work together for his Peoples Good, and to end at last in their eternal Happiness, and they are therefore bound to put an implicate Trust in the unsearchable Riches of his Goodness, to commit themselves entirely to his Disposal, and to submit with Patience to gloomy Dispensations; Is there an equal Reason for Subjects to submit to the peevish Humour of a short-sighted earthly Monarch, tho' he were driving on a Nation to Destruction?----The Consciences of Sinners tell them, it is fit they give absolute Submission to the Punishment of Sin inflicted on them, in this, or in another World, by him who is the righteous Judge of all: But what Reason can be given for Subjects universally groaning under Tyranny, without being convicted of any Crime, voluntarily to submit to be whipt, rack'd, tortured, or put to Death at the Will and Pleasure of an arbitrary Monarch?----Again, as our Goods and Lives are lent us from the Lord, and are at his sole Disposal, so when he takes them back, we ought to resign them to him that gave them: But shall we, shall a Nation, slavishly give them up to any vicious Intruder, whatever Name he may assume, whenever he calls for them, altho' it be impious and absurd in him, to pretend to an absolute Propriety in them?

In fine, None but the supreme Being is fit for exercising absolute Dominion over us: No mere Man has a Right to it; it is, in a Sort, impious to claim it; and for Men to clothe any Mortal with it, is to rob God of his Glory, and to give it to another.

3. And

3. And after all, is the Doctrine of absolute Monarchy, and of indefeasible hereditary Right founded on the Scriptures? Surely it cannot be.

But the Holy Scripture contains no such Doctrine as the Divine Right of Kings, as has been fully shewn by several learned and judicious Writers on this Subject: There is no Doctrine there, which by the remotest Consequence, would make God the Author and Patron of Murder and Oppression. What a gross Profanation is this then of the Name and Word of God, for any Man to stile himself God's Minister and Vicegerent, who rules in an ungodlike cruel Manner: It is even offering an Affront to the common Sense of Mankind, to pretend a Warrant in the Scriptures for a Tyrant and his Posterity, tho' they prove as bad, or worse than he is, to continue in the Possession of the Kingdom, which it would be sinning against God to deprive them of, however injurious and oppressive they may be to the People.

And now that I have considered the Rise and Nature of a just and free Government; also the Rise, Nature and Injustice of that which is merely arbitrary. Your Time will not allow me to carry on the Comparison betwixt these two Forms of Government, as to their respective Effects and Consequences: I shall therefore conclude with an Application suitable to the Subject we have been discoursing of, and suitable to the Day.

My Brethren, We have lived in the Days of Liberty; little do we know what Hardships our Countrymen and Ancestors suffered from the cruel Hands of Tyranny before the Revolution: But at that glorious Period Liberty revived; and to secure it to Posterity, the Succession to the *British* Crown was settled in the Protestant Line, in the House of *Hanover*.

Thus

Thus Liberty was established on a just Foundation. Liberty is the Glory of the Isle of *Britain* : No Nation under Heaven enjoys it so fully, which makes us so much the Envy of our Neighbours. It is now seven and fifty Years, that our Liberties have been maintained. We have tasted liberally of its pleasant Fruits. Every Man is secured in his Property, is allowed to serve God according to his Conscience, without being persecuted for his Opinion. Trade has flourished. The useful Arts and the liberal Sciences have been much improved.

We enjoyed Liberty even to Satiety. It seems we could not bear so long a Continuance of so great a Blessing. We had been a happy People, had we known our Mercies. We murmured and complained, where other Nations would have rejoiced, and been thankful. Liberty degenerated into Licentiousness. Immoralities prevailed and overspread the Land, which by swift Degrees grew ripe for a Stroke.

When, lo the young Pretender to the Crown of *Britain*, an Instrument of Vengeance in the Almighty's Hand, arrives on our Coast, lands, and claims these Kingdoms for his Father ; gathers an Army, and with it, undisciplined as it is, penetrates far into our Country, while the *French*, though we hope in no great Numbers, are landed to assist him.

And now, my Brethren, Popery and the Protestant Religion, Liberty and Slavery, Light and Darkness are before us. --- By a strange Perversion of the Use of Words, he says he comes to deliver us from Slavery, when we are already free, and to re-establish our Liberties and Laws ; yes, to be sure in the same Way they were enjoyed before the Revolution, when they hung upon a slender Thread, the Will and Humour of a haughty King : And can we expect

expect better Usage from his pretended Son or Grandson? Is not the Family supported by the Pope of *Rome*, and the Kings of *France* and *Spain*? The young Adventurer acts under them: And will the Maxims and Interests of Popish Powers incline them to support the Protestant Religion? Are absolute Monarchs fit Persons for securing the *British* Liberties? If their Subjects at home groan under their oppressive Measures, what may we a foreign Nation expect if they shall conquer us?

But who can believe that he, who claims us as his Property, who produces his natural indefeasible Right to govern us, can make us free? A free People know no such Right to a Crown; this Right, were it a just one, would leave us no Right at all, but give him a Title to us and our Effects, and he might treat us and them according to his Pleasure.

After this, what avail his fairest Promises? They are mere Concessions, which we would have no Right to demand to be made good. But let him be never so ingenuous in making them, is the Word of one Man, however honest, a Security for our Rights, to be compared with that we have already settled by Parliament?

But if he be an honest Man in one Sense of Honesty, and true to his Principles, he must break Faith with us as we are Hereticks.

He professes indeed a deep Concern to see us all in Slavery; but who were suing to him for Redress? Was he invited over by the Voice of the Nation? Is it from a Spirit of Liberty that he comes at the Invitation of a few, to conquer and enslave the rest? Or now that he has come, do the Asserters of Liberty entertain him? By whom is he supported? Who are his Followers? Are not many of them avowed

ed Defenders of absolute Monarchy, and of the divine, indefeasible Right of Kings? Is not the Bulk of his Army made up of those into whose Savage Breasts the Spirit of *British* Liberty has not yet enter'd? People who, from their Infancy, are inured to Slavery, and to absolute Subjection to the Heads of their Clans, are prepared for doing or suffering any thing for their Idol King. But what though the more knowing, as well as the poor and ignorant in the Highland Army, may thus be animated with an Enthusiastick Zeal to raise their Leader to what they call his Kingdom? Can their Keeness and Fierceness in his Behalf, in any Shape, be lookt upon as Zeal for the Rights and Liberties of the Subjects?

What can we look for but Tyranny from him, who calls our lawful Sovereign an *Usurper*, who succeeded to the Crown upon the Footing of a Parliamentary Right *? The plain Meaning of this Language is, that the Wisdom of the Nation had no Right to settle the Succession as they did, and for them to pretend to do so, was *Usurpation*: If so, all the Laws enacted during this Usurpation, whether they regard the publik Interest or private Property, must go for nothing, and be repealed. The whole Revolution System must be broken, as an Innovation, an unjust Encroachment upon the King's indefeasible Right. Every Thing must return to its ancient Channel, and be put in its own Place, in the Place it was in before the Revolution: Thus all would be cast loose, and a Door opened to the greatest

* The Act of Parliament here referred to, is plainly founded upon a due Regard to hereditary Right; and at the same Time, is an open Declaration that it may be forfeited by a particular Person, and that it is not indefeasible.

est Confusion and Disorder ; a Multiplicity of intricate Law-suits would ensue ; Rights would be can-
vass'd a-new ; Families turned upside down ; not a few
cast out of their Fortunes, under Pretence of return-
ing them to their rightful Owners : The publick
Debts would remain unpaid : Many would lose their
all ; and a few Intruders would gather up the Spoil.

Every Thing would be done in an Arbitrary
Manner, according to the Pleasure of the new made
Prince, who being exasperate against the Nation, on
Account of the long Exile of his Family, from what
he calls his paternal Kingdom, and on Account of
the Opposition he now meets with in his returning
to it, would, it is to be feared, take his Revenge,
and rule in a more oppressive Manner than even his
pretended Ancestors did before him.

He says he will not do so ; but by the Samples he
has given us, what may we expect ? While he was
among us, did he not levy Money, demand and
take up Corn, Hay and Horses, and other Things
in an Arbitrary Manner ? He has begun very soon
to invade Mens private Properties ; and what may
we expect were he settled among us ? Did his Pro-
clamations breathe a Spirit of Liberty or Arbitrary
Power ?

But what though he were free of all that has been
said against him ? What though he were a Prote-
stant, had no Dependence on the Pope, nor *France*
nor *Spain* ; were a true Friend to Liberty, and eve-
ry Way qualified to reign over a free People ; what
is that to us, who are engaged to another ? The
publick Faith is given to his present Majesty, and
his Royal House : There is a Covenant subsisting be-
tween him and the People : His Enemies cannot say
he has infringed our Rights, or been unfaithful on his
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his Part of the Covenant : Under his auspicious Reign, every Man has lived quietly under his own Vine, and his own Fig-tree ; And shall we be so base as to break our Engagements to him ?

Some, I know, will say, Who are engaged ? I answer, All and every one of us. All who have lived under the Protection of the present Government, are, in the Nature of the Thing, engaged to support it : This makes them inexcusable, who have risen up in Rebellion. They had their Rights and Properties secured, had free Access to the Laws, and the Exercise of their Religion ; in which last Article, some of them had uncommon Mildness exercised towards them : Their Lives and Fortunes were under the Guardianship of the present Government : They were nourished and brought up under it, and yet they have rebelled against it, and are this Day making a daring Attempt to abolish the Covenant betwixt the King and the People, and to set up *One* to rule us, according to his Will and Pleasure.

What a hard Necessity have they brought the Nation to ? Either they must be dispersed and routed, and yet they are our Countrymen, Bone of our Bone, and Flesh of our Flesh, or the Nation must perish and go to Ruin, and every Thing that is valuable and dear to us, ly at the Mercy of a Tyrant. This is a sad Pass that every true *Briton* is brought to, to be obliged in Point of Duty to his Country to wish, and even to be active in bringing about a sad Disappointment to many of his Countrymen ; which, however grievous it may be to them, it is better that they who are but a Part should suffer, than that the whole be ruined : It is just Matter of Mourning and Humiliation !---All these Judgments are from the Lord : Our Sins deserve them, and have brought them

them on us : We have been a professing People ; but all Ranks from the highest to the lowest have, in many Instances, broken Covenant with the Lord ; and now he is threatning in his sore Displeasure to cancel the Covenant made between our King and us, or to render it ineffectual for his and our mutual Security.---As we would avert this Judgment, let us, thro' the Grace of God, set about real Repentance and Reformation : Let us break our Covenant with Hell, and return unto the Lord, so shall he return to us and to the Land in Mercy, restore Peace, establish and perpetuate our civil and religious Rights and Liberties.



SERMON II.

2 KINGS xi. 17.

*And Jeboiada made a Covenant between the King also
and the People.*

DANIEL v. 19.

*---Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept
alive; and whom he would he set up, and whom he
would he put down.*

THE placing these two very different Accounts of a King and a People over against one another, plainly leads us to draw the Comparison between a Free and an Arbitrary Government*. On a former Occasion I began to state Matters on both Sides: I proposed,

I. *To consider the Rise and Nature of a Free Government, as it is founded upon a Contract betwixt King and People.*

II. *To*

* *Note, As a good Government is one of the greatest Blessings, and a bad one amongst the greatest Plagues that can befall a Nation, in delivering this Sermon, proper Meditations were offered under every Head to awaken the Hearers to a Sense of Providence, and to incite them to the Exercise of the corresponding Graces, under both its smiling and frowning Dispensations; especially under those that have a general Influence upon Societies. But as it would have swelled this Sermon to a too great Bulk, to have inserted all these Meditations, I have only offered to the Reader the general Application of the whole.*

II. *To consider the Rise and Nature of Arbitrary Government, and the Injustice of it.*

III. *To compare these two Forms of Government together, as to their respective Effects and Consequences.*

In discoursing upon the *First* of these, I attempted from plain and obvious first Principles, to lay down the sure Foundation of a Free Government: And, in discoursing on the *Second*, to expose the foul Rise of Arbitrary Government, and the Iniquity of it, considered in itself, without Regard to Consequences. I now proceed to the

III. Thing proposed; To compare a Free and an Arbitrary Government together, as to their respective Effects and Consequences:---And I shall enumerate them in the following Order.

1st, Every Man's private Property being secured under a Free Government, is a great Encouragement to Trade and Industry, which tend to advance the Wealth and Riches of a Nation: But there being little or no Security for private Property under Arbitrary Government, is a Discouragement to Trade and Industry, tends to breed Idleness, and brings on Poverty in a Nation.

2^{dly}, After the same Manner the Security of Property under a Free Government, tends to the Encouragement of the useful Arts and the liberal Sciences; whereas Property being ill secured under Arbitrary Government, is a great Lett or Hindrance to the Improvement of the Arts and Sciences.

3^{dly}, When at any Time Trade or Wealth, or Science, flourishes as much under an Arbitrary as under a Free Government, it is owing to some accidental Circumstances, and not to any Thing in the Nature of Arbitrary Power; whereas the flourishing of these under a Free Government is the native Consequence

sequence of Liberty, abstracting from accidental favourable Circumstances.

4thly, There are two Subjects of the last Importance, the Subjects of Civil Government and Religion, which every reasonable Man may talk of, and enquire into in a Free Country ; but which the Generality of the People are kept in Ignorance of, under absolute Princes, who forbid them, under the severest Penalties, to mutter any Thing contrary to received political or religious Maxims.

5thly and *lastly*, A Free Government has a native Tendency, a powerful Influence, to promote universal Virtue in the King and the People : But an Arbitrary Government has a Tendency to occasion great Corruption of Heart, of Life, and Manners, in both King and People.

Now that these are in Reality the respective Effects and Consequences of a Free and an Arbitrary Government, will appear from a plain and easy Illustration of each of them, in the Order in which I have laid them down.

And, *1st*, Every Man's private Property being secured under a Free Government, is a great Encouragement to Trade and Industry, which tend to advance the Wealth and Riches of a Nation ; but there being little or no Security for private Property under Arbitrary Government, is a Discouragement to Trade and Industry, tends to breed Idleness, and brings on Poverty in a Nation.

Under a Free Government, where every Man's Property is secured by just and equal Laws, and the King is appointed by the Society to be the Guardian and Protector of the Peoples Rights, and to put and keep them, either by himself or his Officers and Judges, in Possession of them ; under such a Government

ment, suitably administred, where every Man in every Rank of Life may have as much Property secured to him by Law, as he can justly and honestly acquire, there is great Encouragement for giving Application to every lawful Business --- What a Spur is here to Industry? The Husbandman tries all his Art, and gives true Pains in tilling and cultivating the Ground, as he knows the Fruits of his honest Labour shall not be taken from him. The Merchant ventures chearfully on the dangerous Deep, and brings his Merchandize from afar, knowing none shall pretend a Right to rob him of it, when he brings it home. The honest Tradesman, the industrious and ingenious Manufacturer, ply their several Works, because what they can make by them they are sure shall be their own. Thus a free Government has a happy Tendency to make Trade flourish, Industry prevail, to set all Hands to work, to make private Families and publick States grow rich and powerful. --- Free Countries are the proper Seats of chearful Industry and Plenty.

Now, what a Difference is there betwixt these and Countries under Arbitrary Government? Even as great a Difference as there is betwixt the Doctrine of Property being originally founded on the Peoples Industry, and the Doctrine of its being originally in the King! By the latter Doctrine the People are Tenants at Will; the Sovereign may impose what Taxes he has a-mind on their Estates, or the Fruits of their Labours. And whereas in free Countries every one knows by the publick Statutes what Tax he is to pay, nor can the King nor his Officers impose or demand any thing above it; under Arbitrary Government, as no Man can be certain of his Prince's Humour, which is the chief Rule he is directed by
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in levying his Taxes, so no Man can know by what he has in his Possession To-day, how much of his Estate or Goods the King shall take, and how much he shall leave against To-morrow. This is the Manner of an absolute Monarch! He may take his Peoples *Fields and their Vineyards, and their Oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his Servants,* 1 Sam. viii. 14, 15. And after he has drained the People of their Estates and Goods, he makes Slaves of themselves, as in 1 Sam. viii. 17. *Ye shall be his Servants.---He shall take your Sons, and appoint them for himself, for his Chariots, and to be his Horsemen, and some shall run before his Chariots: And he will take your Men-servants, and your Maid-servants, and your goodliest young Men, and put them to his Work,* 1 Sam. viii. 11, 16. His Subjects, their Sons and Daughters, are, when he commands it, condemned to perpetual Bondage, to the vilest Offices, or the hardest Labour. Death only sets them free, which is often brought about by his cruel Hand.---*Whom he would he slew.*

Now, where the People have no Security for any Thing, no certain Laws for holding their Possessions, or enjoying the Fruits of their Labour, the native Consequence will be, that they will not apply to any Sort of Business, but sink down in Sloth and Idleness, or fly from the Scourge of Tyranny, and take Sanctuary in free Countries, where private Men have Property, and live under the Protection of good Laws; they will fix their Residence in these pleasant Places, become so many additional working Hands, and increase the Trade and Riches of the Nations they have fled to; while in their native miserable Country, Trade and Industry decay, every honest Art is at a Stand, the Lands ly uncultivated, Cities
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grow thin and desolate, and Tyranny spreads a gloomy Horror over the wretched and almost desert Land.

2^{dly}, The Security of Property under a free Government, tends to the Encouragement of the useful Arts, and the liberal Sciences: Whereas Property being ill secured under arbitrary Government, is a great Lett or Hindrance to the Improvement of the Arts and Sciences.

Where Peoples present Properties, however small, are secured by equal Laws, and the Guardianship of these also prepared before-hand, for maintaining them in what they may yet acquire; this gives them a chearful unconstrained Turn of Mind, quickens and sharpens their Invention, and gives them a certain Readiness in finding out proper Methods of carrying on their Business: These being laid hold on, direct their honest Industry, which otherways would be nought but a continual Bungling. ----- When by these Means they provide themselves in the Necessaries of Life, in Fulness and Plenty, their next Care is to purchase the Conveniencies and Pleasures of it; they study a decent Neatness, and gradually rise to Elegance and Ornament in their Dress and Equipage, their Houses and their Tables. Their Possessions not depending on the Will and Caprice of one Man, and so far not precarious, but secured to them and their Posterity, they endeavour to procure to themselves and their Children the sweetest Enjoyment of them. And then the various People who minister unto them, being sure of liberal Gain, and of having it secured to them; this gives a certain Spring to their ingenious Labours; they fall to and continue at their Work with great Alacrity, their Geniuses brighten, and they fall upon many Arts for
adding

adding to the Convenience and Ornament of Life.-- Nor will Encouragement be wanting to the Arts that tend to the Improvement and Entertainment of the Mind. When Persons in easy Circumstances, and of opulent Fortunes, who have an easy Mind, arising from a just Persuasion of having their Properties secured, have also a fine Taste, and a generous Heart to encourage the *Studios* and the *Virtuosi* to minister to them mental and rational Entertainment, there will not be wanting bright and penetrating Geniuses to furnish out Instruction and Entertainment for them: And even tho' the studious Enquirer has no particular Patron; yet as, in free Countries, the Value of the liberal Sciences is known, the Publick will do him Justice; he shall not want Subsistence, shall be esteem'd and honoured: And Glory and Fame are great Incitements to the Study of the liberal Sciences. These require a calm and peaceful Air to breathe in, it is there they flourish.-- But Slavery and Oppression cramp and benumb the Mind, take it out of that calm and easy State, which is so necessary for the free generous Exercise of the intellectual Powers, and fill it with anxious and perplexing Fears and Apprehensions. Under continual Slavery a Man contracts an habitual Narrowness of Thought, which is an Enemy to all Enquiry and Study whatsoever. Tyranny and Ignorance go Hand in Hand; they foster and support each other.

3dly, When at any Time Trade, or Wealth, or Science flourishes as much under an Arbitrary as under a free Government, this is owing to some accidental Circumstances, and not to any thing in the Nature of Arbitrary Power: Whereas the flourishing of these under a free Government is the native Consequence

quence of Liberty, abstracting from accidental favourable Circumstances.

With respect to a Free and an Arbitrary Government, it was just now proved, that the former has a benign and happy, the latter a malign Influence upon Trade and Science. If then a Free People do not always make the greatest Advancement in Trade and useful Knowledge, it must be owing to something foreign to the Nature of Liberty: And after the same Manner, if Countries under absolute Monarchy are not always sunk into the greatest Decay of Trade, and the grossest Ignorance, it is not owing to any Thing in the Nature of Arbitrary Power.---Certain Circumstances may divert or lessen the dire Effects of Arbitrary Government. The Soil of a Country, its Temperature and Product, its Situation with respect to other Nations, may give it great Advantages, and enable it to bear for a long Time the oppressive Hand of Tyranny.---Men of great Geniuses may break forth like a Light shining in a dark Place, in the midst of Cruelty and Oppression.---An Arbitrary Monarch may chance to be a Lover of Learning and learned Men, may found Colleges, and set out Prizes as the Reward of Study; and because Learning cannot thrive under the Hardships of Arbitrary Power, he may exempt the Studios from the common Oppression, and grant them certain Immunities and Privileges; which actually is the Case in those enslaved Countries where Learning makes any Figure, and is a plain Confession, even in absolute Princes, of the happy Influence of Liberty.---Again, if Trade and Learning flourish any where after Liberty is lost, or greatly decayed, what must they have been when Liberty was at its greatest Height? The Effects of Liberty are strong and last-

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ing; and after they have been blown upon by the stormy Wind of Tyranny, through many successive Ages, and now almost demolished, yet, like a noble Ruin, they declare what the Work once was. --- *In fine*, One absolute Prince may be found among a thousand, who has his Peoples Happiness at Heart, and wisely judges that his and their Interests are inseparably connected: One of this Character may encourage Trade, and introduce or improve the Arts and Sciences among his Subjects, by a generous, but very uncommon Exertion of his absolute Power.

But may it not be supposed, that, generally speaking, absolute Monarchs, instead of encouraging the sober Arts of Life, and such as are always useful and beneficial to Mankind, looking upon all their Subjects as made to serve their Pleasure, will call upon them chiefly to exercise such Arts as may best feed and gratify their own private Passions? --- Or even though both Trade and Learning should flourish in a Country governed by an absolute Prince, is there not something in the Nature of such a Government that may tend to keep the Generality of the People in * Poverty and Ignorance? Whereas, in Free Countries it may be expected, that Wealth will circulate, and Knowledge be diffused more generally among all Ranks of Men: And that it really is so, we might appeal to the Histories of States and Kingdoms.---Particularly, with respect to Knowledge, there are, in the

IV. Place, as the next Head of Comparison, two Subjects of the last Importance, the Subjects of Civil Government and Religion, which every reasonable Man may talk of, and enquire into in a free Coun-

* Cato's Letter, Vol. II. No. 62 and 68.

Country, but which the Generality of the People are kept in Ignorance of under absolute Princes, who forbid them, under the severest Penalties, to mutter any thing contrary to received political or religious Maxims.

As there is no perfect human Government, no publick Administration entirely faultless: As some material Circumstances may have been overlooked in the original Plan of Government: As some Mistakes may have crept into it, or been committed in the Management of it, the bad Consequences of which will, sooner or latter, be felt by the People: So it is just and reasonable, that they who are so much concerned, should have Liberty and Access to propose their Thoughts concerning publick Matters. And indeed it is fit that any of them, who can do it, should offer to the Consideration of the Publick, or their Representatives, what may be expedient for supplying the Defects, or correcting the Mistakes of Government. The Affairs of Government affect the Publick, and every Individual, and are therefore Subjects not only of publick Consultation, but of private Debate among Persons of Knowledge and Capacity.

But Arbitrary Government allows of no such Liberty of Speech: Here Men have nothing for it, but patiently to submit to the greatest Hardships; to sigh in Silence without daring to vent their Grief to one another: To complain is reckoned criminal, and severely punishable. What a miserable Condition this, both to be oppress'd, and not to dare to sue for Redress, without being in Danger of being more grievously harass'd!

But if unhappily, by the Power of Custom or Education, any be reconciled to Arbitrary Government as just and equal in itself, this must lay a wrong
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Bias upon their Minds, and have a very bad Influence to pervert their Reason in their Enquiries into moral Subjects. It must be a very uncouth System of moral Principles, that either leads to the Doctrine of absolute Dominion in one Man's Hands, or is built upon it, or formed designedly to support it! What Notions can he have of the benevolent Principle, of a publick Interest, of the Interest of Fathers, Children, Brothers, Friends, and Neighbours, and Fellow-citizens, who really believes that they are all designed and made to gratify the Ambition of one Man? The Belief of this has a native Tendency, not only to give Men a wrong speculative Notion of Morality, but even to vitiate their moral Sense itself, and to restrain their kind benevolent Affections, both in their Exercise towards private Persons and their Country. To believe that we are all the Property of a King, must give us very mean contemptible Thoughts of our selves, and of one another, and must be far from elevating the Mind, or giving us exalted Thoughts of social and kind Actions. What partial Views must he have of Mens Relations and Duties to one another, and how weak a Sense of Obligation to these Duties, especially to such as ought to be exercised towards Inferiors and Dependents, who is once brought to believe, that one Man has an absolute Right to do what he has a mind, to a whole Nation of Mankind!

And then as for Religion; A free Government hinders none from exercising their unalienable Right of enquiring for themselves into religious Matters, of worshipping and serving God according to their Consciences. Liberty is absolutely necessary in order to a manly, rational, and liberal Piety. Without Liberty there can be no Religion; it gives it
Life

Life and Spirit. But as Liberty may degenerate into Licentiousness, it ought to be under proper Regulations; As no Man can pretend Conscience for publishing Opinions that unhinge the Laws of Conscience, or tend to pollute the Hearts and corrupt the Manners of the People; if he, notwithstanding, publish such Opinions, he is justly punishable, and cannot justly say his Liberty is infringed. After the same Manner, if he publishes Opinions subversive of the publick Peace and Order; if Experience shows that the Abettors of such Opinions are dangerous to a Land, it would be Weakness, and an Excess of Lenity in any Government, to suffer such noxious Members to go on unrestrained in their lawless and seditious Practices. Liberty, when under these and the like proper Limitations, is one of the greatest Blessings that is bestowed on Mankind. The religious Liberty I speak of, is encouraged nowhere but under that Government where Civil Liberty is maintained; it is there that the Rights of Conscience are preserved sacred and inviolable; all due Concern and Regard is shown to tender Consciences; and Force and Violence is used towards no Man to oblige him to declare for the established Religion. Now, where a just Mean is observed betwixt an unbounded Liberty and Persecution, it may be expected, that rational and true Piety may prevail, adorned with mutual Love and good Affection, bringing forth the Fruits of Righteousness and Peace, and all this springing from a well-informed Judgment, and an unbiaſt Mind.

But under Arbitrary Government (for Tyranny in the State is ever attended with Tyranny in the Church) no Man is allowed to speak against the King's Religion. All Enquiry, or proposing Doubts
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in the most modest Manner is precluded : The King's Religion must not be called in Question, nor enquired into, but implicitly embraced and believed : This tends to foster the grossest Ignorance, the deepest Hypocrisy and Dissimulation, the chief Qualifications necessary for making Profession of implicit Faith ; and where such a Faith is really given, it is the baneful Source of the greatest Rancour and Ill-will, against all those whose Consciences don't allow them to come up to it : It is the Parent of Rage and Cruelty, Blood-shed and Persecution.---This leads me to the

Vth. and *Last* Observation ; namely, That a Free Government has a native Tendency, a powerful Influence to promote universal Virtue in the King and People : But an Arbitrary Government has a Tendency to occasion great Corruption of Heart, of Life and Manners, in both King and People.

When Government is founded upon Justice, and a Regard to the Common-Good ; when it is established in the Person of the King, and the Succession entail'd on his Posterity, while found qualified to govern a free People, and ruling them according to their Laws, when at the same Time the Peoples Rights and Liberties are secured to them ; when Things are settled on this equal Footing, and neither King nor People hold their Rights on a precarious and uncertain Tenure, but on just, wholesom Laws : This gives both King and People an easy Mind, a free and generous Disposition, begets and confirms mutual Affection, Trust and Confidence : Their mutual Security is a Bond of mutual Union :--- The King, whose publick Conduct is directed by just Laws, is in a fair Way of getting a strong Sense of Justice ; finding himself raised to the God-like
Office

Office of being the Guardian and Protector of a Nation's Rights, restrained only from doing ill, but having great Power put into his Hand of doing Good, and of being so extensively useful to the World, this tends to kindle in him the warmest, most affectionate Concern for the Good of Mankind, especially of those whose valuable Interests are committed to his Care. Again, being accustomed to look on Law and Justice as his Guide and Governour, this may tend to lead up his Thoughts to God, the just and righteous Law-giver and Governour of the World. Thus a limited Monarch has one Sort of Means, in the very Nature of his Government, of attaining to a strong Sense of Justice, of getting his Heart warmed with Benevolence, and kind Affection, and of being affected with a pious Awe and Reverence of God.

And then the People on their Part being secured in their Properties, live quietly and safely with one another: Their mutual Security removes Jealousies and Suspicions from among them, gives them a certain Frankness and Ingenuity, fills them with honest Sentiments, inspires with kind Affection, and incites them to perform social Duties to one another in all their various Relations, Connections and Dependencies.

But, my Brethren, the Government we live under, besides its happy Influence upon our Morals, tends to give a just Refinement to our very Way and Manner of Behaviour in the social Life: In our mixt Form of Government, Monarchy is wisely tempered with Liberty: The Extremes of Tyranny and Licentiousness are equally guarded against: The King, Nobles and Commons are co-ordinate Powers, and ballance one another: Security is given for the Rights of all
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in their several Orders: At the same Time, these Orders are carefully distinguished, and a peculiar Regard is to be shown to each of them, as they rise above one another. And whereas the Members of a mere Republick are apt to grow rough and unpolish'd, and to degenerate into Rudeness and Incivility, and on the other hand the Slaves to Arbitrary Power, have an unbecoming Terror on them in the Presence of their Superiors, or sink into a fawning slavish Complaisance: The Subjects of Monarchs, limited by Law, observe the golden Mean betwixt Rudeness and an abject ceremonious Politeness; while Inferiors give their Betters all due Honour, a Spirit of Liberty breathes in their Behaviour.

Now, if after all, a free Government has not its full Effect upon Mens Minds and Manners, it may yet have a considerable Influence upon them, weak and imperfect as they are.---But because the best human Government is not faultless, being in the Hands of weak, imperfect Men, and because after the wisest Methods are laid down for the securing Property and strengthening Virtue, still the one will not perhaps in every the least Article, and at all Times, be equally secured from Violence and Injustice, and the other in many Cases will be weak and tottering; because this will be the Case under the best, freest Government, it is not a good Reason for exchanging it for the worst, and for servilely taking on an arbitrary Yoke of Bondage, which has so strong a Tendency to unsettle Property, and by falling in with the Corruption of human Nature, has such a pernicious Influence upon moral Conduct.

Arbitrary Power (if its pernicious Tendency is not check'd by an extraordinary Strength of Mind and Virtue) swells a Man's Heart with Pride, drives
him

him on to Impiety towards Heaven, makes him insolent and overbearing, cruel and oppressive towards his Fellow-men : His Subjects fear him, but they cannot love him : His Favourites secretly despise him, while they cringe before him. An abject Spirit of Flattery and Dissimulation reigns thro' his whole Court. His Courtiers again who bow before him in a supple Manner, put on stately Airs towards their Inferiors : As they themselves hang on their Monarch's Will for their Lives and Fortunes ; so, in their Turn, they assume Dominion over the Persons and Estates of others, who again are ready to oppress their Dependents. Thus Cruelty and Oppression rages thro' all the Ranks of Life, Superiors always bearing hard on those below them.

And then as for Equals, by Reason of their being ill secured in their Rights, they are apt to entertain Jealousies and Suspicions of one another. Every Man's Life and Fortune is in perpetual Danger from the false Accusations of Sycophants and Informers. Who can be quiet or easy in his Mind, when, without being heard or tried, he may be sentenced to Banishment, Confiscation of Goods, or Death ?---Such is the malign Influence of Arbitrary Government, that it foment's Pride and Insolence in the Great, sinks down the Poor into mean Spiritedness, breeds in them a dejected sullen Mood, overwhelms them with slavish Terror, or, by driving them to Despair, provokes them to Mutiny and Sedition, while it communicates a selfish Spirit to all Ranks and Orders. No Man being secured in his Property, every one is on Self-defence, tries every Art to secure himself, and his Thoughts are swallowed up in his own private Interest. This looses the Bond of social Love, weakens the kind Affections, raises Envy, provokes

Murmuring, spreads universal Corruption thro' a Land, renders it a Scene of Horror and Confusion, and all this in Proportion to the rigorous Exercise of Arbitrary Power. Thus Tyranny and Anarchy, for their pernicious Consequences, run up into one another.

But the Confusions and Severities of Arbitrary Government, not only tend to foster in the People malevolent Dispositions towards their King and one another; but even to breed in them unbecoming Dispositions towards God, yea Discontent and Distrust in Providence. The Miseries they suffer may tend to cast a Gloom on every Thing about them: Nature, which smiles on all, they may imagine to look unkind on them, and in their Depth of Misery their corrupt Hearts may tempt them to conceive unworthily of God, and of his wise, righteous and good Administration.

On the other hand, The meanest free Man, by having his Rights secured, by being used with Humanity and Justice, may be thereby the more disposed to entertain good Thoughts of a just, and merciful and over-ruling Providence, and by the Divine Assistance, to cultivate good Dispositions towards the Creator and Governour of the World.--I come now to the

IVth. and last Thing proposed, To apply what has been said; And, in the *first* Place, Who will not prefer a Free to an Arbitrary Government? Who would not chuse to have his Rights and Privileges secured by Law, rather than to have them dependent on a Monarch's Will? Who that has a Thirst after Knowledge, would chuse to live in Ignorance and Darkness, and not open his Eyes upon the Truths of God? Or who that has a Sense of Right and Wrong, would prefer being in such Circumstances

as might strengthen his natural Corruption, and debase his Morals, to the being placed in a fair Way to get his moral Conduct rectified and improved? And who, that is endowed with publick as well as private Passions, can bear to see whole Nations denuded of their Rights, living in blind implicate Faith, Hood-winked by Deceivers? What generous Heart can bear, that unhallowed Plan of Government, which tends to corrupt Mens Morals, to eat out the Life of Piety and Virtue, and make Men averse to God and one another? Would he not much rather take Delight in the fair Prospect of Nations secured in their Rights, improving their Minds in Knowledge, put, in one Sense, in a Way to get a just Discernment of religious Truths, and to live together in that Integrity of Heart and Manners, which becomes the Subjects of the righteous Governour of the moral World? But,

2dly, It is not a bare Preference in the speculative Opinion of your Minds, that you are desired to give to a free and lawful Government; allow me to exhort you to get and keep up a lively affecting Sense of its Preferableness to absolute Monarchy upon your Hearts, especially to love and value our happy Constitution:--Your Minds being once convinced of the Justice of it, of its great Importance to Mankind, of its Conduciveness to secure and advance their outward Good, to brighten and improve their intellectual Powers, and to direct their moral Conduct; let your Zeal for defending such a Government, that has Justice for its Foundation, the outward and inward Good of Mankind for its intended Superstructure, rise in Proportion to the Importance of the noble Cause: Zeal for lesser Matters may sometimes rise too high; but Zeal in this Cause, in the

the Cause of Liberty and true Religion, cannot be too great. When the Means of inculcating a pure sublime Devotion, of inspiring generous Sentiments of Christian Love and Charity; when the Ordinances, as laid down in the Purity and Simplicity of the Gospel, when our Rights and Privileges as Men and Christians, as secured to us by our excellent Constitution, as freely enjoyed by us, under a just and mild Administration, under the Guardianship of a gracious Protestant Sovereign, are in Danger of being taken from us; What Heart will not rise against the cruel ungenerous Undertaking? If some Mens Spirits rise to an enthusiastick Fondness for a single Man, for whose Sake they show an unnatural Keeness to subvert our Laws, our Liberties and Constitution, by which the Interest of Thousands is protected: If they risque Life and Fortune in their cruel Zeal for one Man's Interest, in Opposition to that of the whole Society: If they discover so great Keeness for putting in Execution their favourite Scheme contrived to flatter Majesty, and to set mere Force and Power above Law and Justice: Let their Keeness, in the worst of Causes, animate us to a noble Zeal and Ardour, in Defence of that which is the best. Are they this Day practising their fatal and pernicious Errors? Has an erroneous Judgment so great Effect upon Mens Hearts and Passions? Are their Affections set on Fire by false Imaginations? And shall not a clear Apprehension of the Truth of Things, a well-grounded Persuasion that our valuable Interests are at Stake, give us a deep Concern, and affect our Hearts with a heroic Zeal for our Country's Cause, the Wellfare of our Posterity and of Mankind?

3dly, Thus, my Friends and Countrymen, have I drawn the Comparison, in your Hearing, betwixt a
Free

Free and an Arbitrary Government ; have represented to you the just Foundation, and the happy Fruits and Consequences of the one, the foul Rise and Beginning, and the miserable Effects and bad Tendencies of the other, and have applied the whole to make us love and value our present Constitution, and to create in us a just Abhorrence against any Attempts to undermine it.

But if any should alledge, That Arbitrary Government is, in no Country, attended with such bad Consequences, and to such a Degree as here represented ; they may be asked, What is there in Arbitrary Government to prevent these Consequences ? Is it not an Inlet to them ? Has it not a Tendency to produce them ? Have not Mankind often felt them ? And if, in Christian Countries, the Severities of Arbitrary Government are in any Measure softened, are they not the less so, by Reason of Mens perverted Notions of Christianity ?

But some perhaps will say, Why such a Cry against Arbitrary Government, when no such Government is intended to be erected ? To this it may be sufficient, after what has been said, to answer, That it discovers a strong Inclination for Arbitrary Government, and is itself a great Measure of Arbitrariness, for a Man to attempt to thrust himself in upon a Nation to rule over them, whether they will or not.

But all this, some say, is foreign to my Office, and the Offence grows greater by the frequent Repetition of it.---My Brethren, had I thought that discoursing on this Subject needed the least Apology, I would have begun with that :--Nevertheless, that none may triumph too much over this alleged Piece of Indiscretion, in going out of my Province, I would put you in Mind, which is firmly believed by many, that the

the Doctrine of absolute Monarchy, and indefeasible Right, has been chiefly propagated, if not invented and contrived, by cunning Priests, to flatter lawless Princes, and to engross their Ear, that they also might be raised up to join the Crown in keeping the People under. This calls upon all Ministers of the Gospel to disclaim this Doctrine, and thereby to remove the Scandal brought by the Preaching of it upon Religion and the Church of God. --- But who can sit tamely down when our Country is in Danger? When all is calm and quiet in a Nation, and every thing goes on in Peace and Order, People should confine themselves to their own Profession; but when a Country is brought into Danger, every true-hearted Countryman should lend his helping Hand to keep it up from sinking; And are Ministers of the Gospel the only Set of Men who must be silent, inactive, and indifferent Spectators of their Country's Ruin? --- Are they, who, by being employed in watching for Mens Souls, may be expected to have a more than ordinary tender Feeling for the Interests of Mankind; are they the only Persons who ought not to give Vent to their social Passions, in mourning over their torn and distracted Country, in animating their Fellow Countrymen to run to its Support, when so much of our Happiness depends upon its being restored to a peaceful and quiet State? --- When Law and Justice is interrupted by Civil Broils, shall Ministers, who ought to have a Sense of universal Honesty towards God and Man, shall they alone be careless, whether Justice shall regain its Throne, assert its indefeasible Authority over a Land, or Force and Rapine continue their Usurpation?

Though it is not the proper Business of Pastors to judge in and determine Civil Rights in particular

lar Cases between Man and Man, yet as Christianity does not take away the natural and Civil Rights of Mankind, but, on the contrary, lays us under additional Obligations to secure one another in them, it is the direct Business of Christian Divines to testify against any unjust Attempt to unsettle and subvert these Rights. They are more especially called upon to do this, when such an Attempt is pretended to be countenanced by Christianity itself. --- Again, as Christianity lays no unnecessary Restraint upon the Exercise of the Understanding, shall not Christian Preachers inveigh with just Severity against that Sort of Government which tends to keep Men in Ignorance? --- *In fine*, As Christianity is immediately designed to purify Mens Hearts and Lives, ought not Christian Teachers to take the Alarm themselves, and to give it in the loudest Manner to the People, when an Attempt is made to introduce that Sort of Government, which has a native Tendency to corrupt the Hearts and Manners of a Nation?

4thly, If from what has been said it must appear to every Wellwisher to Virtue, and the publick Interest, that Justice and Virtue nourish the useful Arts, which again are Handmaids to the Virtues, and that both together strengthen, support and increase the Wealth and Grandeur of a Nation; then surely * private Vices are not publick Benefits. --- May not Arts and Sciences, and a Nation flourish without abounding Wickedness? Were once Mens Hearts and Heads put in a right Direction, they would find Employment, and raise themselves to Grandeur, Power and Riches, without the Aid of Vice. The World lyes before them, the Materials in it, their Natures,
Pro.

* Fable of the Bees.

Properties, Ends and Uses, are not all yet discovered, nor converted to the Use of Man, nor applied to every Purpose, that human Reason and Virtue, when enlarged, might make them fit for. Till such Time as this be done, let it not be said, that Virtue wants Employment, far less that Vice must be called in, as necessary to the Industry, the Arts and Riches of a Nation: Let Men grow virtuous, and according to their different Tastes, their Abilities of Mind or Body, employ their Heads or Hands upon the Works of God, in the Air, the Earth and Sea, their Labours shall be liberally rewarded, the Stock of private and publick Happiness increas'd, and they shall have great Abundance of every Thing that can make Life joyous and delightful. --- Nor is it vicious in Men and Nations, to enjoy the Fruits of their own Art and Industry. Virtue does not consist in an Insensibility of outward Comfort, nor in extinguishing the Passions towards the Pleasures of Sense; Virtue lyes in keeping them in due Subjection. But is a Man less virtuous than his rude unpolished Forefathers were before him, because a decent Neatness appears about him, and all his Household, which they had no Thought of rising to, but, knowing no better Things, lived and died in Meaness and Obscurity? After the same Manner, are civilized, flourishing and wealthy Nations, who enjoy outward Comforts, as heightened by the Progress of the useful Arts, less virtuous than their uncivilized barbarous Ancestors? Virtue raises Men and Kingdoms to Wealth and Comfort: Let them adhere to Virtue, and their Wealth continues and increases: But if they swerve from Virtue, they sap the Foundation upon which they rose, and return to their pristine Meanness and Obscurity. A vicious Nation

Nation may stand tottering for a while, and live upon the Fruits of its former Virtue, but as no new Supply comes in, it gradually wastes away, and at length the once fair Fabrick falls to Pieces, and tumbles down into a ruinous Heap.

To conclude, --- What Reason have we to bless God for the merciful Deliverances he has wrought for us from Time to Time, and for the Blessings and Privileges we have enjoyed above many other Nations? His Threatning to take away the Mercies we have so much abused, and to send the contrary Judgments on us, ought to awaken in us an awful Sense of the divine Justice, to incite us to a serious Examination of our Hearts and Ways, and to a speedy Repentance and Reformation. Let us then betake ourselves to God, through Faith in Jesus Christ, for the Pardon of all our Sins, the procuring Cause of private and publick Judgments, and for Grace to help us to a suitable Improvement of all his Dispensations, that they may be the blessed Means of begetting in us a truly Christian Temper, and a Disposition to serve God in all holy Conversation and Godliness; and that the End of Threatnings and Judgments being answered, he may graciously remove them from us.

What Praise and Glory is due to his Name, that by his good Providence, blessing the Endeavours of the illustrious and truly Heroic Duke of *Cumberland*, the Rebellion is in so fair a Way of being quell'd.--- Let us, emerging from a Sea of Troubles, while we keep up an awful Sense of the Judgments that have been upon us, and of the terrible Confusion our Affairs were like to have run into, raise our Praise and Gratitude to God for our begun Deliverance; and be earnest with him at a Throne of Grace, that he

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may

may entirely frustrate the Designs and Counsels
our foreign and domestick Enemies, and give us an
our latest Posterity to sit safely under his almighty and
merciful Protection, in the full Enjoyment of all our
Rights, as Men, as Christians and Protestants.

F I N I S.



E R R A T A.

SERMON I. Page 6th, Line 8. dele *in*, *ibid.* l. 31. Rea
administred--p. 9. l. 12. dele *for*--p. 10. l. 31. r. *positiv*
Obligation--p. 16. l. 29. for *biu*, r. *but*--p. 19. l. 4. dele *bu*
--p. 19. l. 5. r. *salefs of Tyrants.*

John Lacey his Back
God give him grace
on it to Look; and to
Read and understand and to
obay the Lords Command

oct, 28th 1806